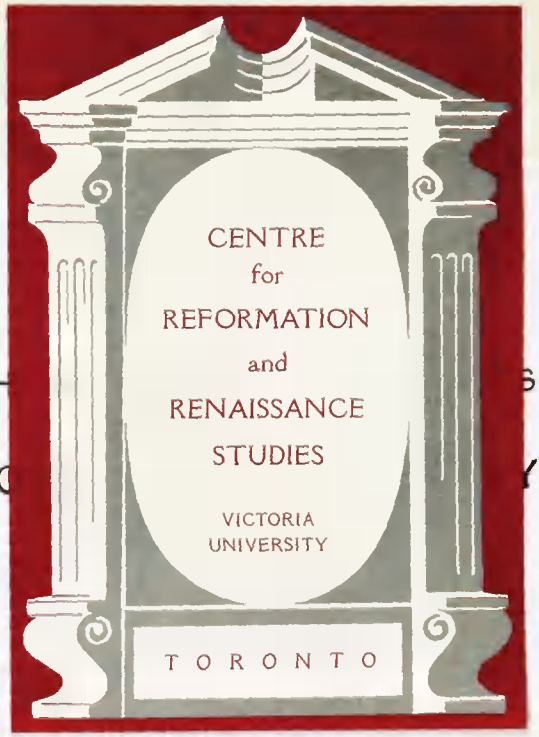
Z
241
R9

241
R9
REF. & REN.



7277 £1/5.-

THE JOHN RYLANDS FACSIMILES

I. PROPOSITIO JOHANNIS RUSSELL

Z
241
R9
REF. & REF.

BERNARD QUARITCH
11 GRAFTON STREET, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.

SHERRATT AND HUGHES
PUBLISHERS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
34 CROSS STREET, MANCHESTER, AND
SOHO SQUARE, LONDON, W.

[Russell, John, Bp of Lincoln]

PROPOSITIO JOHANNIS RUSSELL

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CAXTON CIRCA A.D. 1476. REPRODUCED IN FACSIMILE FROM THE COPY PRESERVED IN THE JOHN RYLANDS LIBRARY, MANCHESTER.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY HENRY GUPPY, M.A.

MANCHESTER: AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON: BERNARD QUARITCH, AND
SHERRATT AND HUGHES. MCMIX.

2819

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE 7

INTRODUCTION 9

HISTORY OF THE COPY 9

TYPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION 10

THE AUTHOR 11

THE PRINTER 15

LIST OF WORKS PRINTED IN THE SAME TYPE 35

THE FACSIMILE

PREFACE

THE present volume forms the first issue of a series of facsimile reproductions of unique and rare books in the possession of the John Rylands Library. The series is to be known as "The John Rylands Facsimiles," and it may not be out of place in this prefatory note to recall the considerations which led up to the present undertaking.

It is a matter of common knowledge that in the possession of this Library there are a number of works, particularly of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which are of considerable importance on account of their extreme rarity. Hitherto, many of these volumes have been accessible only to students in Manchester, because the only known copies are to be found here.

The result has been that, in a number of instances, important pieces of bibliographical and literary investigation have had to be laid aside, and publication delayed, by reason of the inability of workers in America, France, Germany, and other countries, as well as in remote parts of our own country, to undertake a journey to Manchester for the purpose of examining the only known copy of a work which was likely to contribute to a fuller elucidation of the subject of their investigations. Could these workers have had access to faithful reproductions of the coveted volumes, their

purpose, in the majority of cases, would have been served.

With the object of lending encouragement to research work of this character, the Governors of the Library have sanctioned the publication of a series of facsimile reproductions of some of the more interesting and important of the unique and rare books, and prints, of which they are the guardians. The volumes will consist of minutely exact reproductions of the works selected, preceded by short bibliographical introductions.

It is proposed to limit the issue of each volume to five hundred copies. Of this number two hundred will be reserved for gratuitous distribution to the principal libraries of the world. The remainder will be offered for sale, at a price calculated to cover the cost of reproduction, so that the undertaking may not be a charge upon the funds of the Library.

The facsimile has been prepared by a photographic method of line engraving, and printed typographically, in the Photography and Printing Crafts Department of the School of Technology in this city.

The Governors of the Library desire to express their indebtedness to the Education Committee of the City of Manchester, for allowing the resources of the institution to be employed for this purpose.

The John Rylands Library. December, 1909.

HISTORY OF THE COPY

The copy from which the present facsimile is taken is bound up at the end of a volume of manuscripts, written partly on vellum and partly on paper.

In 1807 the volume was in the possession of the Rev. John Brand, the author of "Observations on popular antiquities," and was sold as part of his library, on Friday, the 19th of June in that year. In the catalogue of the sale (page 346, lot 30) it is described as: "A Work on Theology and Religion, with five Leaves at the end, a very great curiosity, very early printed on wooden blocks or types." It was purchased for the sum of two pounds five shillings by Mr. Robert Triphook, who sold it to the Marquis of Blandford, afterwards fifth Duke of Marlborough, for fifty guineas.

At the sale, in 1819, of the Duke's famous library, which had been collected at White Knights, near Reading, in Berkshire, it was purchased by Earl Spencer for one hundred and twenty guineas.

In August, 1892, it was acquired by Mrs. Rylands, as part of the Althorp Library, and is now included in the collections of the John Rylands Library.

The tract was unnoticed by bibliographers until 1809, when a short description of it, by Sir Egerton

Brydges, appeared in "Censura literaria" (London, 1815. Vol. 8, page 351). In the following year, Dr. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, librarian to Earl Spencer, described the volume, and reprinted the text of the "Propositio" in full, in his enlarged edition of the "Typographical antiquities" of Joseph Ames (London, 1810-19. Vol. 1, pp. 11-15). For many years the copy was considered to be unique, until another was discovered in the library at Holkham Hall, the seat of the Earl of Leicester. These are the only two copies at present known.

TYPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

The tract consists of four printed leaves, of which the recto of the first and the verso of the last are blank. The text begins, as in the facsimile, on the verso of the first leaf, and ends on the recto of the fourth leaf. It is without title-page, date, place of printing, or name of printer. It is printed in the type designated by Mr. William Blades, in "The biography and typography of William Caxton," as "No. 2," which was first employed at Bruges by Colard Mansion alone, or by Colard Mansion, assisted by William Caxton, in the printing of "Les quatre derrenieres choses," or possibly in the printing of this tract. It was brought to England by Caxton and employed in the printing of the "Dyctes and notable wyse sayenges of the phylosophers," the first dated

book to be printed by him at Westminster, and in at least seventeen others. A full page has twenty-two lines, without pagination, foliation, signatures, or catchwords. The lines are very irregular, varying from 95 to 102 mm. in length. The actual measurement of a page of type is 148 mm. in height, by 102 mm. in breadth. At the commencement of the text of the speech there is a two-line space for the insertion of a capital, with a small director "ð".

THE AUTHOR OF THE ORATION

". . . a wyse manne and a good and of muche experyence, and one of the beste learned menne undoubtedlye, that Englande hadde in hys time," is Sir Thomas More's appreciation of the author.

John Russell, "orator clarissimus," as he is described in the opening words of the tract, successively Bishop of Rochester and of Lincoln, and Chancellor of England, held many offices of trust under five sovereigns: Edward IV, Henry VI, Edward V, Richard III, and Henry VII. He was a native of Winchester, but the exact year of his birth is unknown. He was entered at Winchester College in 1443, became Fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1449, Doctor of Laws in 1459, Moderator in the Canon Law School in 1461, and in the following year resigned his fellowship, and apparently left Oxford. According to Mr. Blades, he

was afterwards appointed to a prebendal stall in Salisbury Cathedral. In February, 1465-6, he was made Archdeacon of Berkshire, and in April, 1467, he was at Bruges on an embassy to the Duke of Burgundy. In January of the following year (1467-8) he was commissioned by King Edward IV, together with Lord Hastings, Lord Scales who afterwards became Earl Rivers, and others, to conclude a treaty of marriage between his sister, the Princess Margaret, and Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. It was during this mission that Russell purchased the two copies of Cicero's "De officiis," printed at Mainz, by Peter Schoeffer, in 1466, which are preserved, one in Lambeth Palace Library, the other in the University Library at Cambridge. In the latter copy the following interesting inscription occurs: "Empt' p Jo. Ruscel, archidiaconū berkyshyrie apud oppidū bruggense flandrie a° 1467, mens' Apl' 17° die." A few months later he was engaged in arranging the trade relations between this country and Flanders.

In February, 1469-70, Russell was one of the envoys commissioned by Edward IV to invest the Duke of Burgundy with the Order of the Garter. It was on this occasion that the oration which forms the subject of this tract was delivered. The investiture took place at Ghent. In 1471, during the restoration of King Henry VI, he

was employed in negotiations with France, and was presented to the Rectory of Towcester. In the following year, when he is styled "Secondary in the Office of the Privy Seal," he was again employed in an embassy to the Burgundian Court.

It was during one of these embassies that our author became acquainted with William Caxton, the printer of the tract, who at that time was Governor of the English Nation in the Low Countries, a post of considerable importance, entailing the supervision of trade and traders, as well as the conduct of all negotiations between the English and Burgundian governments.

In 1474, Russell succeeded to the Keepership of the Privy Seal, and, in June of the same year, he was sent to negotiate a marriage between the King's daughter, Cicely, and James, son of the King of Scotland. In July he was presented to the Prebend of Mora, in St. Paul's Cathedral; in 1476 he was consecrated Bishop of Rochester; in 1478 he was employed to treat for a marriage between Earl Rivers and Margaret of Scotland; and in 1480 he was translated to the See of Lincoln.

Early in 1483, Russell appeared as "Orator" before Pope Sixtus IV, and was probably in Rome when his sovereign, Edward IV, who had appointed him one of his executors, breathed his last, but he was back in England to take part in the funeral ceremonies in April.

Up to that time he had retained his office of Keeper of the Privy Seal, and in May of the same year he was made Chancellor of England, and continued in that office until the 29th of July, 1485. Russell sat as a Judge in Chancery on the 22nd of June, 1483, and was confirmed in his office on the 27th of June, the day after Richard III assumed the crown.

About the end of 1483 he was chosen as Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and, by reason of having been regularly re-elected down to the time of his death, he is reckoned the first of the perpetual chancellors. He tired of the dignity in 1487, and resigned it; but great confusion being likely to arise from this step "the Academicians earnestly desired him to take upon him the office again, which, he promising, they proceeded to election." In 1488 he published certain "aulary statutes for the government of the University," which were supposed to have made it a model for all universities; and in the same year he accompanied Henry VII on his visit to the University. In 1489 he contributed to the repair of the Law School, and his arms appear on the roof of the Divinity School.

He died on the 30th of December, 1494, at his manor of Nettleham, and was buried in Lincoln Cathedral, at the upper end of the south side, in a chapel where he had founded a chantry, under an altar

tomb. He is said to have left behind him considerable reputation as an author, his two greatest works being "A commentary on the Canticles" and a treatise "De potestate summi pontificis et imperatoris." Unfortunately they were never printed and have not come down to us. He appears to have been a great encourager of reviving learning, but his name will best be remembered for the great change he initiated in promulgating the statutes of the realm in the English language instead of in Latin or French as hitherto had been the custom; this precedent has been followed ever since.

It is worthy of note that in the reign of Richard III, which we regard with so much horror, laws were given to the people of England for the first time since the Conquest in their own language.

THE PRINTER: WILLIAM CAXTON

William Caxton, the first printer in the English language, who, in 1476, imported into this country from Bruges the art and implements of typography, was born, as he himself tells us in the prologue to the "Recuyell of the historyes of Troye," in Kent. To quote his own words: "I . . . . was born and lerned myn englissh in Kente in the Weeld where I doubte not is spoken as brode and rude englissh as is in ony place of englond." The earliest definite date in his history that has come down to us is the year 1438, when he was apprenticed to the

great London mercer, Alderman Robert Large, who became, a year later, Lord Mayor of London.

Caxton must have come of good family, for it was no ordinary privilege to be bound apprentice to so prominent a merchant, when apprentices were "for the most part gentlemen's sonnes."

It was the custom at that period to apprentice youths at the age of fifteen or sixteen years. We may, therefore, reasonably assume that he was born somewhere about the years 1422 or 1423.

The precise date when our printer went abroad is equally uncertain, but it was probably within a year of his entering upon his indentures, since we are informed, in the prologue already referred to, that when he commenced to translate the work in 1469, he had "contynued by the space of .xxx. yere for the most parte in the contres of Braband, flandres. holand and zeland . . ." Of his movements between 1439 and 1450 nothing is definitely known, but in the latter year his name appears in the archives of Bruges as having become security for £110, a sum equal to £1,500 of our money.

Alderman Large did not long survive the year of his mayoralty; he died in 1441, when Caxton had four years of his apprenticeship still to serve. The apprentice would still be bound to the executors of his late

master; and it is assumed that when he had completed his term in 1446, he started business on his own account at Bruges, and became a freeman of his guild.

The city of Bruges had long been not only the seat of government of the dukes of Burgundy, but also the metropolis of trade of all the neighbouring countries, lying as it did on the high road to England, which country, even at this date, received and exported more merchandise than any other country in Europe. English traders abounded in the city, and were favoured by Philip the Good, who had been brought up, almost from a child, in the court of England. This favour found expression in 1446 by the granting of privileges to the Merchant Adventurers, under the name of the "English Nation."

It was the custom, at this period, of merchants in foreign countries to combine for mutual aid and protection, and, in the capital of each country where their business lay, they lived in community like monks, in the strictest celibacy, each having his own dormitory, with a common table for meals, and with a governor at their head. The laws by which they were ruled were issued by the two countries respectively to which they belonged, and in which they resided. The "Merchant Adventurers of the English Nation," as this guild was sometimes called, had been formed for

the above object, and was one of the oldest chartered companies of the city of London. It was in close connexion with the Mercers' Company, by whom it had been originated, and, though incorporated at an earlier date than the latter, was under its control, the principal members of the "Adventurers" being "Mercers."

In 1453, Caxton paid a visit to London to be admitted to the livery of the Mercers' Company, and the high appreciation in which he was held by the company may be inferred from the fact that the fees usually charged on admission to the livery appear to have been remitted on this occasion.

Soon after the accession of King Edward IV to the English throne, a new charter was granted (in 1462) to the Merchant Adventurers, under the provisions of which a governor of the "English Nation residing abroad" was appointed. The first governor was William Obray, who seems not to have acted long in this capacity, since, according to the Mercers' Records, William Caxton was performing the official duties of governor in June, 1462, and in June, 1463.

That Caxton should have been appointed to so responsible a position before he had reached his fortieth year, goes far to prove that he was a man of no ordinary talents and industry. These qualities, com-

bined with a simple piety very rare in those days, especially in such a dissolute city as Bruges, doubtless caused him to be marked out by the "Mercers" as the right man for this important post. As "Governor of the English Nation," Caxton's duties were somewhat similar to those of an ambassador or a consul. An official residence was provided for him, and he had entire control of all English subjects residing or trading in Bruges and the Low Countries.

When Caxton entered upon his duties he acted under the articles of a treaty of trade, which had been in force for many years between the two countries. The term for which the treaty was enacted expired on the first of November, 1465,and it was highly essential that a renewal should be concluded before that date. With this object the King issued a commission under date of the twenty-fourth of October, 1464, appointing Sir Richard Whitehill and William Caxton commissioners to renew the treaty. For some reason the negotiations failed, and not only was the treaty not renewed, but the Duke of Burgundy decreed the exclusion of English-made cloth from his dominions. This brought about retaliation, and the importation of Flemish goods into England was prohibited by Act of Parliament. But neither the Flemish nor the English merchants could suffer their trade to be paralysed,

and so the traffic was carried on by smuggling through the neighbouring states.

In the same year the Earl of Warwick, the Great Chamberlain of England—the nobleman to whom Caxton afterwards dedicated his "Game and playe of the chesse"—ordered Caxton to enforce the Act of Parliament prohibiting the purchase of merchandise by English traders in the Burgundian dominions, and to exact the fines in every case of infringement.

Matters continued in this unsatisfactory state until the death of Philip the Good, in 1467. He was succeeded by his son, the Count of Charolais, Charles the Bold, whose character was in striking contrast to that of his father, and the tide of affairs turned in favour of England.

The young Duke upon his accession to the throne inaugurated a new era at his father's court, thoroughly reforming it by the introduction of stricter manners and a more stately ceremonial, in place of the laxity and freedom which had previously obtained.

In the following year (1468), King Edward IV, perceiving the advantage of a close alliance with so powerful a neighbour, sent Lord Hastings, Lord Scales, who was subsequently created Earl Rivers, the learned John Russell, and others, to negotiate a treaty of marriage between Charles the Bold and the Princess

Margaret, Edward's sister. Upon their arrival at Bruges, they would, in the usual course, be introduced to the Governor of the English Nation, and from this we may date the commencement of a long and cordial friendship between Lord Scales and Caxton, whose religious sentiments and literary tastes seem to have harmonized in all respects.

The marriage was celebrated with great pomp at Bruges on the fifth of June, 1468, many English nobles being present. Caxton, as Governor, would take part in the festivities, and would be introduced to the young duchess, who in a strange land, and surrounded by foreigners, would gladly avail herself of the services of one of her countrymen, who from his long residence in Bruges was familiar with the customs of the country, and was well versed in the French and the Flemish languages.

In the month of September following the marriage, intercourse between the two countries was re-established through the renewal of the treaty of trade, in the negotiations for which Caxton had a hand.

Caxton seems to have found time in the interval of official duties for the literary pursuits to which he was so much attached. In March 1468-9 he commenced the translation of the favourite romance of

that age, Lefevre's "Recueil des histoires de Troye." This he undertook, to reproduce his own words, "to avoid sloth and idleness." He did not make much progress with his translation, and, whether dissatisfied with the result or prevented by the pressure of his official duties, he seems to have laid his work aside without any fully-formed intention of ever completing it.

In the following year, on the fourth of February 1469-70, an imposing ceremony took place at Ghent. Ambassadors were sent by Edward IV, to invest the Duke of Burgundy with the Order of the Garter, and it was on this occasion that Dr. John Russell delivered the Latin oration which forms the subject of the present volume, that was afterwards printed, probably at Bruges, by William Caxton, who was, in all probability, present at the investiture.

It must have been about this time, although the date is uncertain, that he relinquished his office as Governor of the English Nation. It is somewhat surprising to find that Caxton, holding so influential a position, should resign it in order to enter upon duties of a much less ambitious character. But when it is remembered that for several years he had filled an office of grave responsibility during an eventful and anxious period, it is not so much a matter for surprise

that he should welcome the opportunity of exchanging the cares of office for the easy service of the Duchess of Burgundy, which would enable him to indulge in the congenial pursuit of literature. It is not known in what capacity he entered the service of the Duchess, but it was probably as private secretary and amanuensis.

In October, 1470, Edward IV, accompanied by many of his nobles, took refuge from the machinations of the Earl of Warwick in the capital of the dominions of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Burgundy. Here, either as Governor, or in his official capacity at court, Caxton had an excellent opportunity of assisting his countrymen, until the restoration of their Sovereign. In this way he would be brought into personal relations with the king.

This brings us to the most eventful stage in Caxton's career, when the question of his turning printer has to be considered. It was on March, 1468-9, as already stated, that he commenced to translate the "Recueil des histoires de Troye." It appears from the prologue to his translation, that, happening to have some time on his hands he took up the French book, with which he was so well pleased, that he thought it would be a good thing to translate it into English for the benefit of his

countrymen at home and abroad. After writing five or six quires, he laid it aside for some reason, perhaps dissatisfied with the feebleness of his version, and it was not until two years had elapsed that the work was resumed. Then it was that the Duchess, becoming aware that Caxton had commenced the translation, asked to be allowed to see what he had written, and "commanded" him to finish it, pointing out how he might improve his rude English. This he lost no time in doing, making such progress that in six months he had completed the work, in spite of interruptions, including visits both to Ghent and to Cologne. It was in the latter city that the work was completed on the 19th of September, 1471, as he himself tells us in the epilogue to the second book of the "Recuyell." Here are his own words:

"And for as moche as I suppose the said two bokes "ben not had to fore this tyme in oure english lan- "gage/ therefore I had the better will to accomplisshe "this said werke whiche werke was begonne in "Brugis/ & contynued in gaunt. And finysshed in "Coleyn In the tyme of y^{e} troublous world/ and of "the grete deuysions beyng and reygnyng as well in "the royames of englond and fraunce as in all other "places vnyuersally thurgh the world that is to wete "the yere of our lord a thousand four honderd lxxi..."

This royal command to turn into English the favourite history of the time, was followed by the usual results as soon as it got abroad. Many nobles of the court became desirous of possessing copies of the work, so that Caxton, finding it would be impossible to satisfy these demands by the slow and laborious process of hand copying, resolved with his usual energy to learn the art of printing.

Caxton's own story of his introduction to the new method of book production, and his reasons for his interest in it, which are told in his beautifully quaint and gossiping way in the epilogue to the third book of the "Recuyell," cannot be omitted from any sketch of his career, however brief it may be.

"Thus ende I this book whyche I have translated
"after myn Auctor as nyghe as god hath gyuen me
"connyng to whom be gyuen the laude and preysyng/
"And for as moche as in the wrytyng of the same my
"penne is worn/ myn hande wery & not stedfast myn
"eyen dīmed with ouermoche lokyng on the whit
"paper/ and my corage not so prone and redy to la-
"boure as hit hath ben/ and that age crepeth on me
"dayly and febleth all the bodye/ and also because I
"haue promysid to dyuerce gentilmen and to my fren-
"des to adresse to hem as hastely as I myght this sayd
"book/ Therefore I haue practysed & lerned at my

"grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book "in prynte after the maner & forme as ye may here "see/ and is not wreton with penne and ynke as other "bokes ben/ to thende that euery man may haue them "attones/ ffor all the bookes of this storye named the "recule of the historyes of troyes thus enpryntid as "ye here see were begonne in oon day/ and also fynys- "shid in oon day/ whiche book I haue presented to "my sayd redoubtid lady as afore is sayd. And she "hath well acceptid hit/ and largely rewarded me/ "wherfore I beseche almyghty god to rewarde her "euerlastyng blisse after this lyf Praying her said "grace and all them that shall rede this book not to "desdaigne the symple and rude werke...."

Caxton has left us no hint as to the object of his visit to Cologne in 1471, but it is not unlikely that it was with a view to the carrying out of his design to print the "Recuyell." At least three presses were at work in the city at the time of his visit, that of Ulrich Zell, which had been set up in 1466, that of Arnold Therhoernen, established in 1470, and another, probably started in the same year by a printer as yet unidentified, who is known as "the printer of the Dictys." Caxton would therefore have ample opportunity of obtaining some practical knowledge of printing during his sojourn there.

Evidence in support of this view is to be found in the epilogue to the English translation of "De proprietatibus rêrum" by Bartholomaeus de Glanville, which was printed in 1496 by Wynkyn de Worde, a Fleming, who probably accompanied Caxton to England, became ultimately his chief workman, and succeeded to the business at Westminster upon the death of his master.

The evidence is furnished in the following lines :-

"And also of your charyte call to remembraunce
"The soule of William Caxton, first prȳter of this boke
"In laten tonge at Coleyn hȳself to auaūce
"That euery well disposyd man may theron loke
"And Iohn Tate the yonger Ioye mote he broke
"Whiche late hathe in Englond doo make this paper thynne
"That now in our englyssh this boke is prynted Inne."

An edition of this work in Latin, of which a copy is in the John Rylands Library, was printed at Cologne about the time that Caxton was there. The name of the printer has not yet been identified, but it is probable that Caxton, by assisting in the production of this volume, gained his first practical introduction to the art of printing.

Upon his return to Bruges Caxton decided to set

up a printing press, and entered into partnership with a skilful calligrapher named Colard Mansion, who had been resident in Bruges for many years. It is impossible to say when the actual work of printing was commenced, just as it is equally impossible to say whether they obtained their printing materials from Cologne, or from one of the nearer towns of Utrecht, Alost, or Louvain, where presses had been established in the interval between Caxton's visit to Cologne and the establishment of the Bruges press. That there is a striking resemblance between Caxton's first type and the type employed by John of Westphalia, who was printing at Alost in 1473, and removed thence to Louvain in 1474 is used as an argument in favour of these towns.

The first book to be issued from the Bruges press was Caxton's translation of the "Recuyell of the historyes of Troye." It bears neither place of printing, name of printer, nor date, but must have been completed between 1472 and 1474. It is suggested that the success which attended the issue of the translation induced the printers to bring out an edition of the original French text. In the production of this latter Colard Mansion would probably have the chief share.

Three other books were printed in the same type, including the "Game and playe of the chesse," a work

translated from Jean de Vignay's French version of the Latin original of Jacobus de Cessolis by Caxton, who completed it on the last day of March 1474. The other two works, the "Meditacions sur les sept pseaulmes penitenciaulx," and "Les fais et prouesses du noble et vaillant chevalier Jason," are in French, and without a date, but it may be safely assumed that they were the productions of Colard Mansion alone.

By this time Caxton had got to work on a new fount of type, a picturesque secretary form resembling the calligraphy of his time, which had probably been cut for him by Colard Mansion. It has been suggested that the old fount, designated by William Blades as "Type no. 1," which must have been well worn, was discarded by Caxton and left in the hands of Mansion when he embarked for England in 1476.

The new type described as "Type no. 2," which Caxton brought with him into England, had most probably been used already at Bruges in the printing of at least two books: "Les quatre derrenieres choses," and the "Propositio Johannis Russell" here reproduced. The probability of the first-named work having been printed at Bruges is considerably strengthened by the fact that of the only two copies at present known the British Museum copy is bound up with a copy of the "Meditacions sur les sept pseaulmes

penitenciaulx," already referred to as one of the five known books printed in type no. 1, and certain manuscript notes in the volume go to justify the assumption that they were bound together soon after printing. The reasons for suggesting that the "Propositio Johannis Russell" was printed at Bruges seem to be so obvious as to render any statement of them unnecessary.

The reason for Caxton's return to his native country was doubtless the anxious state of affairs in the Low Countries. The year 1476 was a sad one for the Duchess of Burgundy and for Caxton. The Duke Charles the Bold, after six years of constant warfare with his neighbours, was still desperately, but vainly, struggling after that shadow of empire, which he had so long and obstinately pursued. On June 22nd 1476 was fought the bloody battle of Morat, between the Duke and the Swiss, which resulted in the downfall of the House of Burgundy, and in the ruin of the Burgundian power. In January of the following year the Duke himself was slain.

Caxton's mistress, now no longer the ruling power at the court of Bruges, retired into comparative privacy. In her altered position she would no longer require the services of Caxton as secretary.

This sudden and important change in the state of

affairs at Bruges would account for Caxton's desire to return to his native land. There was now a more hopeful prospect of employment at the English court, where Edward IV, firmly established on his throne, was likely to look with favour on the old merchant, whose sympathies had always been with the Yorkists.

Soon after Caxton's arrival in England we find him settled at Westminster, within the precincts of the Abbey, in a house with the sign of the Red Pale. He commenced his career at the Westminster press under the patronage of King Edward and his court. Among his patrons he also numbered Earl Rivers, the Earl of Warwick, the Countess of Richmond, and at a later period King Richard III, and King Henry VII.

It was not until the 18th of November, 1477, that he issued his first dated book, "The dyctes and notable wyse sayenges of the phylosophers," of which the only copy known to contain a colophon furnishing the date, as well as the title just given, is in the John Rylands Library, but it is more than probable that in the interval between his arrival in England, and the issue of this dated volume, he was issuing the smaller undated books which are printed in the same type. In support of this view we cannot do better than quote a passage from the prologue to an edition of "King Apolyn of Tyre," issued by Wynkyn de Worde

in 1510, which was translated from the French by one of his assistants, Robert Copland, who started a press on his own account a few years later in Fleet Street. The passage referred to, which is drawn from William Herbert's edition of the "Typographical antiquities" of Joseph Ames, London, 1785-90, (vol. 1, p. 149) is as follows:

"My worshypfull mayster Wynken de Worde "hauynge a lytell boke of an auncyent hystory of a "kynge somtyme reygnynge in the countree of Thyre "called Appolyn/ concernynge his malfortunes and "peryllous aduentures right espouuentables/ bryefly "compyled and pyteous for to here/ the which boke I "Robert Coplande haue me applyed for to translate out "of the Frensshe language into our maternal Englysshe "tongue at the exhortacyon of my forsayd mayster/ "accordynge dyrectly to myn auctor/ gladly follow- "ynge the trace of my mayster Caxton/ begynnynge "with small storyes and pamfletes and so to other."

Caxton was indebted to his old friend and patron, Earl Rivers, for the commission to print "The dyctes and sayenges . . ." The translation was the work of the Earl who entrusted the work of editing to Caxton. He afterwards gave him several other translations to print, and until his treacherous murder by Richard III, in 1483, was Caxton's staunch friend.

Twenty books are known in the type no. 2, all of which were issued before 1479.

From the time of Caxton's return to England until his death, which probably took place in 1491, although the exact date is not known, his press was never idle. If we include the Bruges type (No. 1), and the recastings of two of the founts, Caxton employed eight different founts of type, and produced about one hundred books and broadsides, many of which are only known to us through single copies, or fragments of copies.

To speak only of William Caxton as England's first printer is to do him an injustice. He was very much more than this, since his work as a translator and editor shows him to have been a man of extensive reading. With all his love of chivalry and romance he printed nothing, even in that age of laxity, which had not for its object, as he himself relates, the promotion "of courtesy, humanity, love, and virtue, and the inflaming of the hearts of his readers and hearers to eschew works vicious and dishonest." He did not study merely to meet and follow the public demand, but rather to direct it, and in this he succeeded well.

As the pioneer of the printer's art in England, he will ever be entitled to the gratitude of his country, but his name will also be remembered as that of the principal agent in stimulating the growth of purer

taste among his countrymen, and in lifting English literature from its low position, so that it blossomed out during the following century in the greatest poets and writers the world has ever seen.

The standard authority for the life and work of William Caxton is: "The biography and typography of William Caxton, England's first printer," by William Blades. This, and "Who was Caxton?", by R. H. B[lades], 1877; "A short history of English printing," by H. R. Plomer, 1900; "A census of Caxtons," by Seymour de Ricci, 1909; "The Dictionary of national biography"; William Herbert's edition of the "Typographical antiquities" of Joseph Ames, 1785-90; and T. F. Dibdin's further enlargement of Herbert's edition of the "Typographical antiquities," 1810-19, have been consulted and drawn upon in the compilation of this introduction.

A LIST OF THE WORKS PRINTED IN THE SAME TYPE AS THE "PROPOSITIO," WILLIAM CAXTON'S TYPE "NO. 2."

[1476?] Les quatres derrenieres choses aduenir.

*[1476?] Propositio Johannis Russell.

*[1477?] Le Fevre: The history of Jason.

[1477] Book of curtesye.

[1477] Cato: Paruus Catho. Magnus Catho. First edition.

[1477] Cato: Paruus Catho. Magnus Catho. Second edition.

[1477] Chaucer: Anelida and Arcite.

[1477] Chaucer: The temple of bras (i.e. the Parlement of foules).

[1477] Lydgate: The chorle and the birde. First edition.

[1477] Lydgate: The chorle and the birde. Second edition.

[1477] Lydgate: The horse, the ghoos, and the sheep. First edition.

[1477] Lydgate: The hors, the shepe, and the ghoos. Second edition.

[1477] Lydgate: Stans puer ad mensam.

[1477] Lydgate: The temple of glas.

[1477] Horae ad usum Sarum. First edition.

[1477] Infancia Saluatoris.

*[1477] The dyctes and notable wyse sayenges of the phylosophers.

*1477 The dyctes and notable wyse sayenges of the phylosophers.

*[1478] Christine de Pisan: The moral prouerbes.

*[1478] Chaucer: The Canterbury tales. First edition.

Of the works marked with an asterisk copies are in the possession of the John Rylands Library.

Propositio Clarissimi Oratoris Magistri Johannis Russell decretorum doctoris ac tunc Ambassiatoris xpianissimi Regis Edwardi dei gracia regis Anglie et Francie ad illustrissimū principem Karolum ducem Burgundie super susceptione ordinis garterij &c.

Estimauit nos Illustrissiē princeps Sacra regia magestas vt tue celsitudini pcelebria sui ordinis garterij insignia ad quem per collegas illius gloriosc societatis tam spectabile xpiani orbis fastigium vti pulcherrimū futuꝛe illius ordinis ornamentum dignissimi deletum est debitis honoribus offeramus. Optantes igitur i primis ab imortali deo tanti primordij prospꝛos in euum successus delectat paululum huiꝰ nouelli federis deus. vtilitatem prestaciam ꝗrimari. quatenus nec inanis aut supuacua militariū collegiorꝛ reputetur inuēcio. Habeant ꝗfideles amborꝛ principū vnde peculiariꝰ deleant ꝛtulari. Nam si res ab nostra memoria ꝑpter vetustatem remotas. ꝙ litterarꝛ monimentis

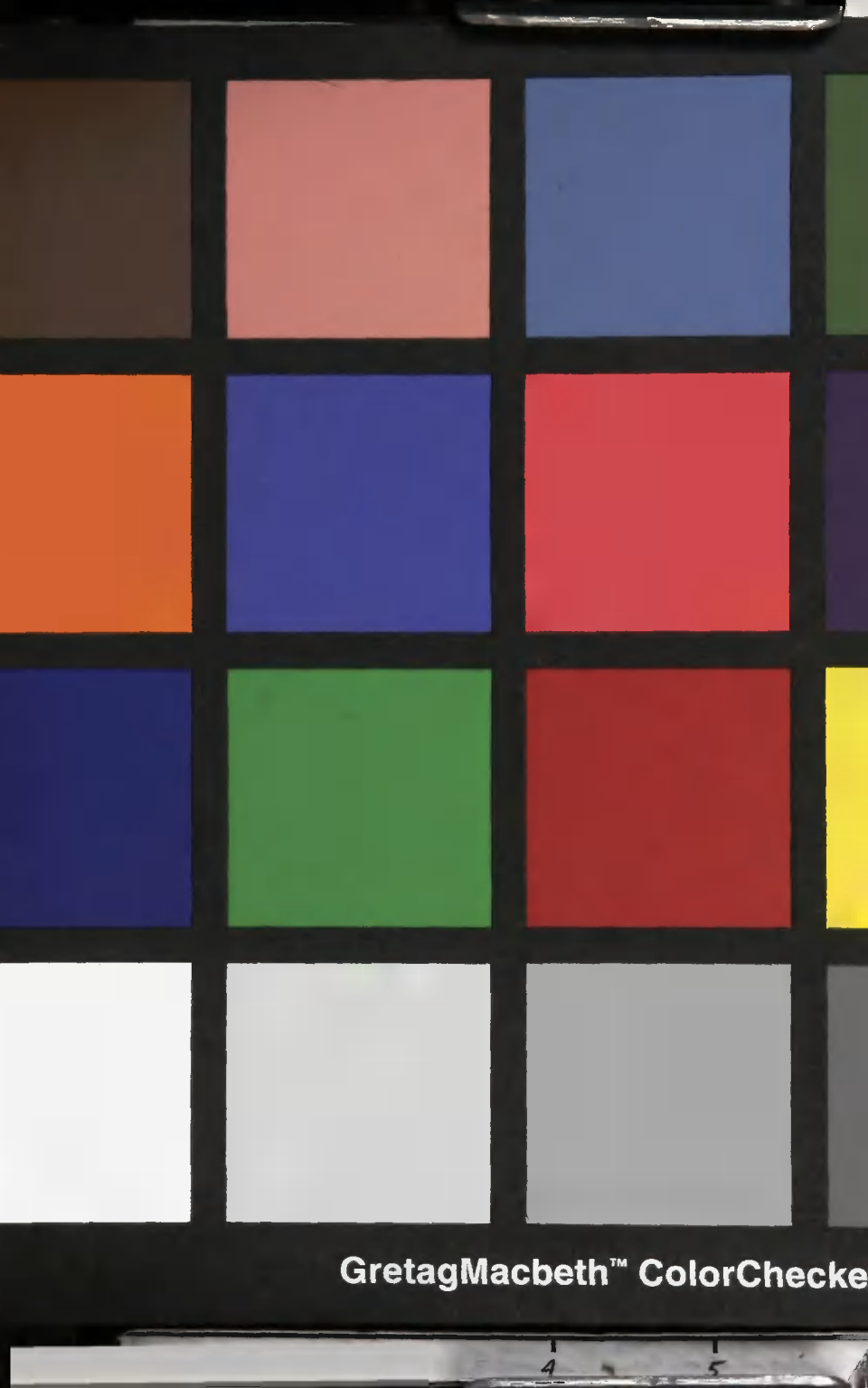
repetere curauerimus. Coleras q3 firmissimas societates. multas sanctissimas amicicias/ligas/cõcordias/quib9 huãne sepenumero nacõnes/vltro citroq3 adiute releuate q3 fuerint. Coram i medium afferre fas foret/tanta siquidẽ historiaꝝ copia vt ipas ãnumerãtes facilius tempore quã multitudine careremꝰ/tot em ab exordio nascencii populoꝝ extitere cause principes federãdi/tot occasiones hominem hominꝫ cõsiliandi/tot demq3 necessitates/ecia diuersaꝝ linguaꝝ gentes ad vnius animi motum cõsonancã q3 reducendi Qdꝫ si hac cõsuetudine spreta singuli suoꝝ sensuũ procerima ducerẽtur/alter q3 alterius qdꝫ absit consorciũ amicicia vt horreret/quid aliud quiꝫ ipm demum tempus/de quo Cicero i rethoricis cõmemorat rediisse putaremꝰ/qñ homines tectis siluestrib9 abditi sparsim i agris bestiaꝝ more vagabãtur/et sibi victu ferino vitã inhumanã ꝓpagabant. Sed tandẽ subintrauit melioris racõis vsus/dum homo se animal sociale plasmatũ quandã inter omes cognacõem/qua hominẽ homini insidiari nephas sit natura ipsa

conſtitutã intelligens/quodã mutue aſſociatio
nis deſiderio indies vehemẽt afficiatur. Ex quo
igitur ſocialis nature fonte/omnis ordo/omnis
religio/Omnis vnanimis cetus ſcaturijt. ab
inde q3 proceſſit/vt q̃ plurimi militares viri
quoq; natura vt plurimũ feroq; eſſe ſolet/modeſ
tiam/obediẽciã q3 pene religioſam profitentis
diuinis aliquociens rebus cultu et habitu/oraõdo
obſecraõdo. offerendo mira celebritate inſeruiauit
taliter quidẽ dupliciũ officioq; vicisſitudinem
moderantes vt et in plijs ſtremitate/in tẽplo
extra deuotione ac pietate quoſlibet antecellant
Et ne nimis longe huius p̃cellentis obſeruan
tie queramus epẽpla/poſt ipſam rotunde tabule
fraternitatẽ/in qua temporibus victorioſiſſimi
regis arthuri. tot reges. tot principes. ac ba-
nones militaribus inſignibi cingulis cõuiuebant
duo ſeorſũ egregia militanciũ collegia decenaq;
honorificentius q3 ſtabilita ſunt/vnũ ab illuſ
triſſimo Edwardo tercio illius note anglorũ
rege. Alterum ab excellentiſſimo genitore tuo
philippo duce/Duobus ſiquidem principibus

ſempiterna recordatione dignis/Que nimirum collegia ſicuti iam diu maioris preſtancioris q3 fame inter cetera computari meruerant/Ita et rebus ipſis ac pſonaꝝ meritis aliozꝝ quorumlꝫ bet apparatuum pompam quintuplo et omnē ſimileꝫ ornatū ſeculi ſuperare creduntur/Nec vllis vnquā temporibus aut hunc aut illum ordinē celebracōnem fuiſſe credimus/quam preſenti etate noſtra in qua vtrigz principi moderno bene/placitū eſſe videmus/Alterius ſe ſe mutuo ſuorum ordinum decorare inſignijs/vt qui in vno preſidet/in altero quodāmodo ſe ſummittat/ſicq3 ſuum earum habeat vt et reliquum ād quem applicari voluit pariter honorabilē ipſo ſuo facto oſtendere nō detractet/Hec ſunt magnifice princeps et tua et regis mei meternū recolenda precomia/Hec fortiſſima fraternitatis vinacula ſeriſſima dilectione ſigna/Jam em̄ noſtri glorioſiſſimi Edwardi regium collum ſelleris aurei torque circumdatur. Et iam potentiſſimi ducis principis procul dubio. iuſticia. fide. veritate. ac omnium rerum ordine probatiſſimi et inſignis

Generoſum gemu ſpectabilis garterij cingulo accingetur Ille ſero rex noſter tuarum dignitatum zelator feruentiſſimus/ordinem tuum ſinceruum colit et ſeneratur. Tua ſublimitas amplexabitur diſcreteſe. obſeruabit qz ſuum/Ille tuus confrater in ordine tuo/tu illius conſors in ordine ſuo. Et ecce res noua maxima ſeri uſqz ſubditorum gratulatione digna/quando duo tanti principes ſemel ſororis contubernio fratres effecti iam. iam iterum atqz tercio in aliud legitimū gemus fraternitatis coēadunt Nam quis non ſpereet individue Trinitatis opus exiſtere/ſua qz opitulante gracia diuiſionem capere non debere. Hanc triformis trinitatis plantacionem nouam meo arbitrio quis inuidet aut aliter videt. Hec eſt plantatio celeſtis que non eradicabitur/quoniam vt ſapientis dicto fidem habeamus. Funiculus triplex difficile rumpitur. Ega ergo Inuictiſſime princeps ſuſcipiat tā lilens illa ſeculo noſtro vnice ſpectata magnificencia tua. ꝓpiamiſſimi bellatoris Georgij ſancti religionem/accingere cingulo

milicie ſocietatis eius/ Jnduere clamidem ordi
nis quaſi armaturam fidei ipſius/honoret amodo
vniuerſum collegium. tue ſingularis pſone me
ritum ſingulare/ vt qui hactenus in virtute cu
cis piiſſimi andree maximoꝝ hoſtium tociens
incredibilis victor euaſeras/ De cetero glorioſo
iſto martire nouo accumulato patrono/ valeat
tua in eum ſantta deuotio ſimul et in ipſius vi
uifico ſigno vbi res expoſtulauerit egregie triū
phare ad dei laudem/et exaltationem fidei xp̃ia
ne/noſtri qz ſeremſſimi regis robur. ſolacium re
uelationem qz/et gloriam plebis ſue. amen


GretagMacbeth™ ColorChecke